Make sure that the **subject** and **verb** of each clause or sentence agree in number. A singular subject takes a singular verb, and a plural subject takes a plural verb. To proofread for subject-verb agreement, circle the subject and verb in each sentence and be sure they agree.

**BOLO!** Be on the lookout for subject-verb agreement errors in these situations:

1. When other words come between subject and verb, you may mistake the noun nearest to the verb for the verb’s real subject. Be sure to match the verb to its real subject.

   The **funds** generated by our annual bake sale **are** not high enough.

2. When the subject is made up of two or more words joined by **and**, the subject is plural and takes a plural verb. Don’t be confused by a singular noun coming right before the plural verb.

   My brother and his friend **commute** every day from Covington.

   The prepositional phrase **as well as** is not the same as **and**. It does not create a compound subject (as **and** does).

   The **mayor and his brothers** **are** going to prison.
   The **mayor as well as his brothers** **is** going to prison.

3. When the subject is made up of two or more words joined by **or** or **nor**, the part of the subject nearest the verb determines the number of the verb.

   John or his brother **is** going to be responsible for this.
   John or his brothers **are** going to be responsible for this.

   Either my father or my brothers **are** going to the football game.
   Neither my brothers nor my father **is** going to the football game.

4. When the subject is a word like **committee, audience, or jury**, the number of the verb depends on whether the subject is treated as a unit or as a group of individuals:

   The jury **delivers** its verdict at noon. (The members of the jury are acting as a single unit.)
   The jury **take** their seats in the courtroom. (The members enter and seat themselves as individuals.)
5. When the subject is a word like mathematics or measles, you may be tempted to use a plural verb, but these words are singular and take a singular verb.

   Measles has become less common in the United States.

6. When the subject is each, every, everyone, everybody, everything, anyone, or anybody, you may be tempted to use a plural verb, but these indefinite pronouns are always singular.

   Everybody in the class has done the homework well in advance.

   Each is often followed by a prepositional phrase ending in a plural word, but the verb is still singular.

   Each of the students is responsible for doing his or her work in the library.

7. When the sentence contains the subject complement one of those . . . who, use a plural verb.

   Rose is one of the students who score perfectly on quizzes.

   When the sentence contains the subject complement only one of those . . . who, use a singular verb.

   Rose is the only one of the students who scores perfectly on quizzes.

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